

MISSISSIPPI BAPTIST RECORD.

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CLINTON, MISS.

THURSDAY, NOV. 22, 1877.

The Baptist Side.

We give space to a communication elsewhere, which is headed, "The Presbyterian Side." Our brother desired to speak largely to our strikers in the churches of the Record, which we are glad to have him do.

He says he is not a minister; in that, our information was at fault. But no matter, he writes better than many of the cloth, and he will be a minister by and by.

(1) W. G. W. agrees with Father Darnell and himself, but does not believe that Rome is the true church. Here, he and we agree against Father Darnell, that the Baptist Church is the only true church. How many churches are there, we would like to know? But Father Darnell, W. G. W. and we agree that the true church of Christ has existed since Christ. Rome is not that church; all history attests that Calvin originated the Presbyterian Church. By this showing, Calvin's Church can not be the true church. Where was the true church?

(2) W. G. W. thinks he belongs to the true church; he is not a baptist, not however, because he is a Presbyterian, and the Presbyterians hold the truth, but because he has believed, confessed and been received into the fellowship of Christians, and in the communion, sharing both peace and joy.

(3) Our language needs no modification. It only needs to be construed without prejudice, and taken for what it says.

(4) We are glad to agree with so intellectual a denomination as the Presbyterian in so many particulars, but our brother just here shows the effect of not being able to "stand" these Centennial sermons. We do differ as to baptism, but that is a small part of the trouble. Here it is: Who ought to be baptized, and who consequently, ought to be members of the church? We say Christians only; he says believers and their children. This clearly obliterates the line between the world and the church, by taking the world into the church. In one case spiritual union with Christ is held essential to church membership; in the other, a fleshly union with a church member is the necessary thing. This subverts the church, if we understand it. We leave the reader to judge whether our language was too strong. Believing fully in a converted church membership, and a personal religion, we are convinced that the Pedobaptist theory strikes directly at the very foundation of New Testament church organization. We stand to our guns.

(5) There is more or less Jesuitism among Baptists, no doubt, but not more, perhaps, than may be found among our neighbors. As a rule, Baptists are very aggressive, as they ought to be, but with it they are bold and candid. This we think can hardly be denied. We think our critics was to say the least, unkind, in using the opprobrious term in connection with us, and our discussion with the Herald. But if he thought us Jesuitical, and still thinks so, let it stand, and we will "stand" it.

(6) As to the man who called Presbyterians liars &c., we turn him over to the merciless teeth of our critics, and let him as he may, we will never raise a finger.

(7) We cannot answer this question just now. It is apart from our subject. We suppose, however, that the "union" might be a union without Presbyterians.

(8) Because we differ as to the propriety and right of it. Upon several points, however, we are agreed; for instance, it is agreed among us, East and West, that Pedobaptist churches are not gospel churches; their ministers not baptized, not church members in a Scriptural sense, and hence, are not New Testament ministers. Now some of us, believing these things, decline to recognize them to preach for us, while others think it lawful to invite them to give religious instruction, simply as private gentlemen. That is all the explanation we offer.

(9) Our critic ought to know what suits his church, but we do not change our opinions to suit other people. We reserve the right to think just as well of our Presbyterian brethren, as in our view they appear to deserve. We love and admire them on many accounts, and as we do not write to please people particularly, we shall say so when we think proper. In the meantime, we shall be free to show our opinion of their wrongs. If this should be "disgusting" to any of them, we shall regret it, but not cease it.

We are very glad W. G. W. wrote for the Record, how he will do so again some time. We would send him our paper if we were sure he could "stand" it.

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If the Pastor tries to do something to supply their lack of service toward them, they complain that he neglects them and withdraw more and more their support from him. These things, with sharp criticism thrown in, such as "he preaches very poor sermons, it don't pay to go to church, his wife lets her children go very shabby," or "she is very extravagant, and always keeps her husband in debt," take all the spirit out of the pastor, and he resigns, feeling that though he may not do better, he will hardly do much worse. And this is why some churches can't keep a pastor.

There is a great difference between one who is a Christian and one who is not. But this difference does not consist, as many suppose, in the Christian's, being perfect, and the unconverted ones' being imperfect. They are both, in their nature and practices, very imperfect. The difference lies in this; the Christian knows that he is imperfect, and deplores his imperfection, and longs and strives to be perfect, even as his Father in Heaven is perfect. But with the sinner it is quite otherwise; He frequently thinks himself about as good as he need be; and if he knows his sinfulness, he thinks little of it, but rather studies how he may continue to gratify his carnal desires with the least chances of worldly shame, or with the least trouble to himself.

The Love of Secret Prayer.

This is a token of a gracious state. Only the converted can love to pray in secret, because only the real children of God can enjoy communion with Him. It is by far a better test of genuine piety than public prayer, or hearing sermons, or even preaching; because many things may carry one to the public prayer meeting, or to preaching, such as eloquence, good singing, large and encouraging congregations, none of these things, however, can move one to go away to a secret place to meet only the invisible Father of Spirits. Yet to the real saint this is among the chiefest joys of life. How is it with you reader? Do you love to pray in secret?

Answering Questions.

Editors do not know every thing by a great deal, and hence are not competent to answer all questions. We do not wish to be considered an oracle, and therefore decline to notice many queries sent us. It is a settled rule with us to notice no question that seems to look toward committing the Editor to one side of a church difficulty. If brethren who know both sides are not able to settle their matters, we do not think we can decide rightly, after hearing but one side. We hereby give notice that we will not notice such queries.

"Dropped."

At the close of a very temperate statement concerning his connection with the S. B. P. Society, Bro Mayfield says, in the Baptist Record: "And now in regard to our own article. A mutual friend has written that the paragraph next preceding the last, does injustice to the parties concerned. It reads, 'the late management was incompetent to manage the finances or business of the Society' &c. &c. We yield our opinions in this matter, and cheerfully withdraw all that part of the paragraph which reflects on the management."

We shall now drop this subject. If the controversy is continued, it will have to be done by other parties. We did the best we could with the business we had in charge; handled its funds with scrupulous care; as far as we knew it, we did our duty, and even if our work was a failure, as Bro. Paxton thinks, we still have a clear conscience."

We think this eminently Christian and right. We see no just cause for a continuation of the controversy, and we hope this will be the end of it. A month spent in earnest Christian work will be worth more to ourselves and to the cause of Christ, than years given to wrangling over an unfortunate enterprise.</

